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REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated an objection to the drawings on the cover sheet, but did not indicate any details for the objection. The Examiner is requested to clarify the status of the drawings.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-9, 13-20, 29-31, 34, 36-38, 40-41, and 44-45 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,081,386) in view of Wakabayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,487,386). Claims 10-12, 21-28, 32-33, 35, 39, and 42-43 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitney, et al. in view of Wakabayashi et al. and in further view of Ichikawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,609,560) alone or in view of Brock-Fisher (U.S. Patent No. 6,500,126), Harman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,742,718), Conero et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,676,600), or Osadchy et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,266,551). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections of claims 1-45, including independent claims 1, 13, 23, 29 and 34.

Claim 1 recites a system for identifying unauthorized use of a transducer which is detachably connectable with a particular imaging device. An electronic identifier is associated with the transducer wherein the electronic identifier comprises an identifier distinguishing the transducer from other transducers of a same type and manufacturer. A processor is operable to generate a security signal in response to the electronic identifier, wherein the security signal corresponds to authorization of the identifier distinguishing the transducer from other transducers for any use with the particular imaging device.

The cited references do not disclose these limitations. The Examiner notes three uses of the identifier in Kitney et al. For "whether the probe is authorized for the particular imager," Kitney et al. discloses a manufacture's code so that the system can recognize which catheters are acceptable for use with it (col. 14, lines 7-9). Such authorization is not an identifier distinguishing the transducer from other transducers of a same type and manufacturer.

A serial number is another code to prevent re-use by logging a previous use (col. 14, lines 10-11). However, the prevention of re-use is not non-authorization of the identifier for

use with a particular imaging device. The re-use deals with no or yes to previous use, not authorization or not of the identifier for any use with a particular imaging device.

The Examiner notes "whether probe is authorized for the procedure site being contemplated." Kitney et al. use the application code for generating signals and treating the signals in an appropriate way based on cite (col. 14, lines 12-16). This use is not for authorization, but only to configure the imaging.

The Examiner cites to Wakabayashi et al. for "usage beyond the stale date of cumulative use." Like the re-use of Kitney et al., usage beyond the stale date is not non-authorization of the identifier for use with a particular imaging device. The stale data deals with time of use, not authorization or not of the identifier for any use with a particular imaging device.

Lastly, the Examiner cites to Ichikawa et al. for "proper user." Ichikawa et al. allow one or more users to control a plurality of specific devices. Each device is associated with an identification (col. 3, lines 49-53). By selecting the device with a controller, the user selects which device to control at a given time (col. 4, lines 4-46). The device identification is used to control the selected device and not the other connected devices. Ichikawa et al. do not suggest authorization, and do not suggest authorization of the identifier for any use with a particular device.

Claim 7 recites wherein the security signal corresponds to text on a display of a statement of ownership, a theft associated warning, a lack of authorization of use, and combinations thereof.

Kitney et al. do not provide for textual output.

Wakabayashi et al. output a displayed warning indicating cumulative time is close to durable time (col. 4, lines 54-59; and col. 6, lines 17-27). The cumulative time may also be displayed (col. 4, line 66-col. 5, line 3). When the durable time has been reached, the operation of the apparatus is stopped (col. 4, lines 60-65). Wakabayashi et al. only display a warning regarding time of use, but do not indicate a display of a statement of ownership, a theft associated warning, or a lack of authorization of use.

Claim 8 recites wherein the processor is operable to allow use of the transducer with the imaging system in response to a match of the code and the electronic identifier and is operable to generate the security signal in response to a mismatch of the codes and the electronic identifier.

Kitney et al. disable re-use based on the transducer identifier (col. 14, lines 10-11). For the first use, a match allows use. For subsequent uses, a match disables use. Kitney et al. do not suggest generating of a signal in response to a mismatch of codes.

Wakabayashi et al. matches the identification for time of use tracking. There is no suggestion of generating a signal in response to a mismatch of codes.

In a rejection of other claims, the Examiner notes Ichikawa et al. in association with a judgmental match/mismatch for proper user authorization. Ichikawa et al. match a controller to a selected one or ones of a plurality of devices. For a mismatch, the non-selected devices ignore the instructions. Ichikawa et al. do not suggest generating a security signal in response to mismatch of codes.

Claim 11 recites an electronic identifier associated with the transducer wherein the electronic identifier comprises a radio frequency tag. Ichikawa et al., Brock-Fisher, Harmon et al., Conero et al., and Osadchy et al. disclose wireless communications, such as using transceivers, of imaging information or operational control information. Such communications do not provide for a radio frequency tag. The coils of Osadchy et al. provide position information using magnetic fields (col. 11, lines 25-30), but are not radio frequency tags.

Claim 13 is allowable for the same reasons as claims 7 and 8.

Claim 19 recites generating a request for the security information, inputting by a user the security information in response to the request, and generating a security signal in response to a mismatch of the code and the security information.

Claim 19 includes the generating a signal in response to a mismatch limitation similar to claim 8, so is allowable for the same reasons.

Further limitations distinguish from Kitney et al. and Wakabayashi et al. Kitney et al. rely on information stored in the transducer and interaction with software stored on the system (col. 14, lines 1-36). Kitney et al. does not request security information and input by a user of the security information in response to the request. Similarly, Wakabayashi et al. track usage of a transducer. A service person may reset the tracking (col. 5, lines 4-9). Wakabayashi et al. do not disclose requesting security information and inputting by the user the security information in response to the request.

Dependent claim 22 recites ceasing in response to proximity close to the imaging device. The Examiner relies on out-of-range for proximity. Claim 22 provides the opposite, ceasing when close to the imaging device.

Claim 23 recites a wireless identifier tag connected with the transducer. As discussed above for claim 11, the cited references do not disclose identifier tags. Instead, the wireless connection is used for communication of control signals and imaging data. Identification may also be transmitted. However, given the communications provided, there is no suggestion to use a tag.

Similarly, dependent claim 24 recites a transponder. The cited references use transceivers, or transmitters and receivers.

Dependent claim 26 recites the identifier tag used with a transducer connectable with the imaging device. The cited references use wireless communications instead of connecting with the imaging device.

Dependent claim 28 is allowable for similar reasons as claim 22.

Claim 29 is allowable for similar reasons as claims 24 and 26.

Dependent claim 33 is allowable for similar reasons as claim 22 and 28.

Claim 34 is allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 36 recites receiving the identification information at a remote location other than the imaging device. The cited references deal with communications between a

transducer and an imaging system, not receipt of identification at a remote location other than the imaging device.

Claim 40 recites generating a list of available transducers including the transducer as a function of wireless transmission of identification information. The cited references provide for one or more transducers. The imaging system may include a list of transducer identifications. However, there is no suggestion to generate the list as a function of wireless transmission.

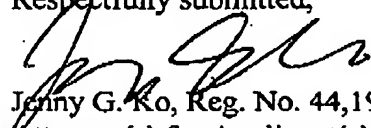
Claim 42 recites detecting a variation in proximity as a function of a wireless signal strength, and activating use of the transducer by the imaging system in response to the detecting. The cited references do not disclose detecting variation in proximity. The Examiner cites to range of operation. However, range of operation limiting use does not provide for activating in response to detected variation in proximity.

CONCLUSION:

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seeks early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application but believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any issues, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at (650) 694-5810 or Craig Summerfield at (312) 321-4726.

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Respectfully submitted,

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